

MINUTES
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
September 13, 2016
City Council Chambers

A. CALL TO ORDER - Park Tour

The meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission of the City of Woodstock was called to order by Chairman Mike McCleary at 5:04 PM on Tuesday, September 13, 2016.

B. ROLL CALL:

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Bruce Farris, Peter Riis, Vice-Chair Steve Erwin and Chairman Mike McCleary.

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT: Chris Neuhart.

STAFF PRESENT: Public Works Director Jeff Van Landuyt, Parks & Facilities Superintendent Ernie Nelson, Chief Deputy City Clerk Jane Howie, City Manager Roscoe Stelford, and Economic Development Director Garrett Anderson.

OTHERS PRESENT: Mayor Brian Sager.

Those present, other than Jane Howie, toured the following City parks before returning to the Council Chambers to begin the Commission meeting:

- Hennen Conservation Area
- Davis Road Park
- Prairie Ridge Drive Park
- Ryders Woods
- The Labyrinth in Peace Park
- Roskie Field in Bates Park

After the tour, City Manager Roscoe Stelford, Economic Development Director Garrett Anderson, and Mayor Sager left the building.

The Commission meeting commenced at 7:10 PM.

Others Present: Members of Soccer Explorer group and members of Woodstock Xtreme Girls Softball group.

C. FLOOR DISCUSSION: Anyone wishing to address the Commission on an item not on the agenda may do so at this time.

1. Public Comments: None.
2. Commission Member comments for any item not on the agenda: None.

D. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES:

Motion by B. Farris, second by P. Riis, to accept the August 9, 2016 Minutes as presented. Ayes: Bruce Farris, Peter Riis, Vice-Chair Steve Erwin and Chairman Mike McCleary. Nays: None. Absentees: Chris Neuhart. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

E. TRANSMITTALS: The following items have been transmitted to the Commission for information and there is no discussion expected or action recommended.

1. Recreation Department Report for August 2016

Staff did a walk-through of the Aquatic Center yesterday. Biggest expense before the 2017 opening is to repair the garage door. Acid is eating away at the garage door; it's rotting out. J. Van Landuyt said the garage door may be galvanized steel of some sort, all the hardware is rusting away.

2. Parks Division Report for August 2016.

M. McCleary asked about Olson Spray pool feature; did it operate this year? E. Nelson said yes it was in operation; however, kids continued to throw debris into it, which has caused issues. The Parks Division is exploring options to help avoid these issues.

B. Farris asked if a dog fountain could be installed near Bigelow Field. Staff will look into this. B. Farris commented that the bench by Sullivan Field is a nice addition. P. Riis asked about the vandalism at the park. It appears the paint is wearing away. E. Nelson will have this addressed.

B. Farris said there are a lot of people using the Recreation Path early in the morning. The path is a great addition to Emricson Park.

M. McCleary asked if it would be feasible to have a splash pad added in Olson Park. Could this be included in the CIP? Staff will discuss and consider this.

The Commission discussed the condition of Roskie Field in Bates Park due to constant play on the field. There's been talk about taking the field out of service for a year; however, this could cause issues with many user groups. E. Nelson said the usage on City fields is incredibly high compared to high school fields, and there are only three fields in this specification; Dream, Merryman 7 and Roskie fields. Currently, three fields are not being constructed at Merryman Fields Park. There is room for expansion; however, these concerns will need to be addressed in future CIP documents. Staff will meet with the user groups to determine how best to proceed. The decision will be shared with the Commission.

E. Nelson added that the Parks Division does not cancel games due to weather; they do inform user groups if they were unable to prep the fields due to weather. The user group makes the decision to play or cancel.

F. OLD BUSINESS: None.

G. NEW BUSINESS:**1. Discussion of New User Group Request by Explorer Soccer Program:**

Mike Caruso discussed the possibility of their group using Davis Road soccer fields to play home games. Their club is currently playing in McHenry and Crystal Lake, but they'd like to move into Woodstock. Their current home field is in McHenry; however, it's not up to their standard. It's a city field and the Park District maintains it.

They've seen the Davis Road Park site; they're looking to use the facility to promote their group. This is a hi-level soccer club that plays groups from all over.

The majority of the players live in McHenry County and they're looking for a home field. The group is looking for mid youth and adult size field; they'll play 10-20 home games for this current season. Their main club is in Carol Stream, but they've expanded out this way. M. McCleary asked why they want to come to Woodstock? M. Caruso said Woodstock is centrally located for the group. They have about 100 kids in club and some kids are commuting to Schaumburg for games. The group is currently a for-profit company; however, they're working toward becoming a not for profit company. M. McCleary asked if the Park Master Plan addresses user groups that are for-profit? D. Zinnen said he's not sure about that, but he'll look into this. D. Caruso said Chicago Inferno is a not for profit company, but the Explorer Program is currently for profit. M. McCleary asked staff if the fields can accommodate the additional use. The City does have to limit the number of games that are played on the fields in an effort to keep them in better shape during the season. E. Nelson said as long as criteria is met according to sports turf, and the games at Davis Road Park and Emricson Park is for youth only. E. Nelson will consult the schedule to confirm the number of games played on Saturdays & Sundays. S. Erwin said it may be 1-2 games per week. It was mentioned that the field does not have lights. D. Caruso said the user group has lights they can bring to the field.

D. Zinnen said this group wants to be considered as a new user group this season. District 200 has allowed use of their fields for practice, but it's costly and time-consuming to use those fields because of field maintenance.

M. McCleary asked if this is a cut program. M. Caruso said it's a cut program; although he's unsure what Woodstock has. M. McCleary said there are leagues throughout the City. D. Zinnen said the Rec Department does some camps for user programs that play at Northwood Middle School; they use District 200 fields more than the City of Woodstock fields. P Riis asked if mostly adult leagues are using fields currently. Out of six fields, three are currently in use. These fields are not used for practices. Woodstock United Soccer pays District 200 \$1.00 to use their fields, but they're a volunteer program, not for profit. WUS pays a contractor approximately \$10,000 for field maintenance. 423 kids, ages 4 – through high school age. They also have the Crossfire Program tied in with Woodstock United. It's a feeder program leading to a more competitive program. All

trainers and coaches are volunteers, not paid. Had a larger Crossfire program in the past, growing program.

M. McCleary said Davis Road Park is in good condition. There are portable toilets but no concessions, and the fields are rotated. This group would like to partner with the City because they are currently maintaining the fields themselves. They are already set up for this year. Woodstock already has a Rec Program and they are nervous about bringing in another group from outside of Woodstock. The group already gives back to the community by giving scholarships to interested kids that can't afford the program. They already have their fall and spring programs lined up.

M. McCleary asked the Commission if they should accept Explorer Soccer as a new user group. D. Caruso said their owner would fit their games into the field. Parks & Rec will have to determine if there is available time on the schedule. Adult group has top priority for Davis Road field, and existing groups have priority, in chronological order. Remember, Davis Road Park is games only, no practices allowed. Adult fees vs youth fees, Woodstock resident vs non-resident fees.

P. Riis made a motion to accept the Soccer Explorer Inc. as a new temporary user group for the City of Woodstock, and to revisit this in the spring of 2017. Instill the Sunset Clause until the end of November 2016; September through November 2016, second by S. Erwin. All in favor; Motion is approved.

2. Discussion of Additional Facility Request by Xtreme Softball Program

John Tillmans and Christina Ramirez talked to the Commission last year about expanding their program. They are concerned about this season as they have to attend a scheduling meeting very soon. They experienced a scheduling problem last year. P. Riis asked when schedules are confirmed. D. Zinnen said that's not done until January or February. He said the City could offer Bigelow Fields, perhaps, and fill in on Main in Emricson Park. The group is trying to fit into what's available and piggy-back the teams. P. Riis said if no one is using Bigelow Field, then that's a good idea. They also use Woodstock High School. This group is an existing user group. It comes down to the number of facilities the City has. The group has 4 teams. Their season runs from May through the end of July or early August. Tournaments are usually played away. B. Farris asked if most of their participants are residents of the City of Woodstock. J. Tillmans answered yes, they are. It was requested that the user group contact the Rec Department for scheduling.

B. Farris informed staff that the fence at Bigelow Field is leaning. E. Nelson said this will be addressed in the Capital Improvement Program along with the fencing on Dream Field. P. Riis asked if staff meets with user groups to find out what their needs are? E. Nelson said they do not. The Department of Public Work, in particular the Parks Division, makes these decisions.

Staff informed the Commission that local students will be working on a walkway between Merryman Fields and Woodstock North High School. Also, the area on South

Street near Woodstock High School where the stairs are located will be made handicap-accessible. And, a connector path will be constructed between Westwood Elementary School and the nearby neighborhoods which will allow students to walk from housing developments to the school.

B. Farris asked about the bridge design in Merryman Fields Park. J. Van Landuyt said the Transportation Commission will review the design. M. McCleary added that the group is looking for areas where other paths may be needed, similar to the Woodstock North High School / Merryman Fields Park project. These projects are in the infancy stages.

H. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

1. Tentative agenda items identified by Administration: None.
2. Requested by Commission: Any new member may suggest an item to be considered by the Commission at a future meeting, but must be approved by a majority of the Commission to be included as a future agenda item.

Master Plan, next month, Chapter 6 – Development Plans.

There may be a user group meeting in October or November. D. Zinnen will look into this.

I. ADJOURN:

Motion by B. Farris, second by S. Erwin, to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Parks & Recreation Commission on Tuesday, September 13, 2016 at 8:28 PM. Ayes: B. Farris, P. Riis, Vice-Chair S. Erwin and Chair M. McCleary. Nays: None. Absentees: C. Neuhart. Abstentions: None. Motion carried. Meeting Adjourned until the next Regular Meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission on Tuesday, October 11, 2016.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Howie
Chief Deputy City Clerk